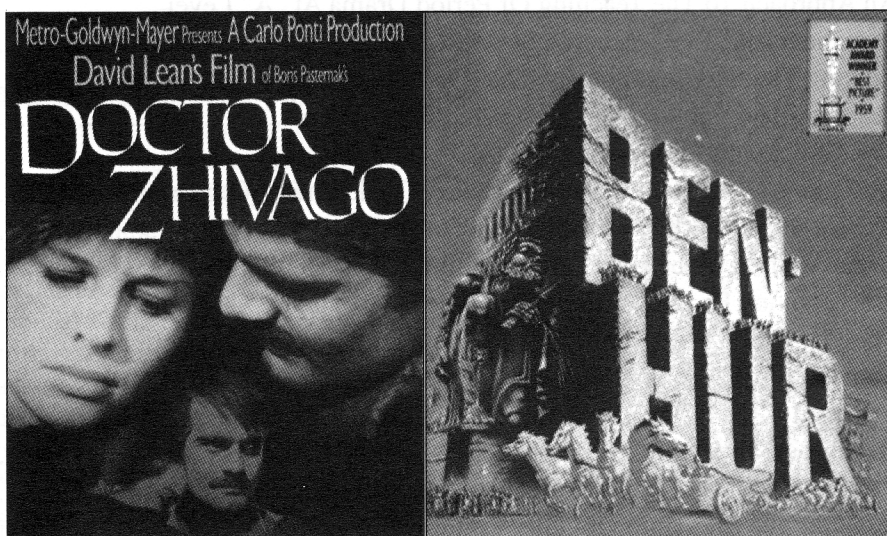


# Using Videos In The English Language Classroom

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**When using videos in the English language classroom, teachers can tap sources such as: home videos, advertisements on television, news broadcasts, documentaries, television movies, and films.**



Videos : a rich resource for English language teaching.

**V**ideos may be used for several purposes:

## **As a means of arousing pupils' interest**

Just before embarking on a particular theme, a relevant videoclip may be shown to enthuse the class in the subject.

## **As a pre-task stimulus**

The class may first view a particular segment of a movie and then be asked to do an assignment in the vein of "Imagine you were the character in the movie. Write a letter... or Describe your experiences..."

## **As a source of input for listening comprehension exercises**

Language learning becomes more interesting and realistic as word is coupled with action. Questions may be framed in such a way that they focus on

the pupils' listening comprehension and note-taking skills: e.g. *What did he say? When would they arrive?*

## **As a source of knowledge**

Besides the teacher, videos can provide basic inputs on language structures and other general information. It adds variety to language instruction and if judiciously used, creates a greater impact than the monotonous chalk-and-talk method of instruction.

## **As a springboard for learning language structures and vocabulary**

Worksheets based on a particular videoclip may be produced to focus on certain language structures. For example, the extract based on *Jurassic Park* may be used as a means of discussing the use of the past tense in describing completed past actions. Besides, it also allows the teacher to relate the verbs to the actions

and the names to the objects. Language learning in the abstract will probably remain in the abstract.

## **As a tool for discussing values**

Movie segments may also be used to discuss moral values. For example, one may wish to discuss family values in *Mrs Doubtfire* and *The River Wild*, patriotism in *The Killer Angels* and questions about life and education in *With Honors* and even *Forrest Gump*.

## **As a means of reinforcing what has been learnt**

A systematic development of language learning materials based particularly on movie tie-ins allow for the relevant movie segment(s) to be shown as a means of reinforcing what has already been read about and learnt. The pupils' interest in movies necessarily increases their interest in the language and, hence,

**Level: Upper Secondary EL Classes**

**Sequence of lessons**

Oral	Discussion of a photograph from a movie in the manner of the GCE "O" level EL Oral Examination
Crossword	Identifying missing words in a text
Scanning	Comprehension questions interspersed with text
Skimming	Pupils are given disconnected excerpts and asked to guess what information is contained in the missing chunks
Intensive reading	A reading comprehension exercise with text adapted from the movie tie-in and in the manner of the GCE "O" Level EL Paper Two format
Grammar in focus	A discussion of a particular grammatical structure found in the movie tie-in
Creative writing	A description of the literary technique used by the author and how best the pupils may exploit it in their own writing
Video time	A task set for the pupils based on a particular segment of the movie, requiring them to make use of certain language skills

**Level: Normal Technical EL Classes**

**Sequence of lessons**

Oral	As above
Reading comprehension	Questions in the manner of the Ministry's Guidelines (1995) are set, based on an extract from a simplified version of the movie tie-in
Close procedure	Another extract from the same novel or a related book with certain words blotted out that need to be identified
Reading comprehension (graphic stimuli)	Pupils to relate the printed word to given pictures from the movies
Form-filling	Pupils to fill in a form to enable them to join a related organisation
Video time	As above

*Examples of task chains.*

their desire to learn it. As a result, language learning exercises become more meaningful and effective.

**Guidelines on using videos**

Teachers who are considering the use of videos in the EL class may wish to take note of the following adapted from "Guidelines for Using Videotapes: A Checklist for Educators" published in the Mar 92 issue of *English Journal*.

**GENERAL:**

The videotape segment, after discussion and direct teaching, should be between ten and twenty minutes in length, *not* a full-period component.

Consecutive class periods should not be devoted to the showing of a videotape; serialised viewing is not teaching.

The videotape is not a daily lesson component nor a one-time special event. It is effective if used frequently.

The teacher should avoid sending unintentional, but destructive, double messages through performing clerical tasks during the viewing session.

**THE RATIONALE:**

The aim of the lesson is *not* "to watch a videotape".

All pupils should have a clear instructional purpose in watching the video segment, not passively viewing it or killing time.

**THE LESSON:**

A directed reading or writing question should precede the viewing of a particular video segment; discussion of that question follows from the viewing.

Active viewing is checked by the teacher via a writing assignment, worksheet, small group activity or other evaluative means.

During the viewing, the teacher should actively supervise the class, to answer

the individual pupil's questions and ensure task-orientation.

As a meaningful homework assignment, pupils should be urged to compare, contrast, evaluate or perform some critical thinking or writing task related to the video-based lesson.

Sufficient time has to be built into the lesson for pupils to question and comment, following the viewing experience.

**THE TECHNICALITIES:**

The teacher should reduce the light in the room for greater visibility. However, a dark room is not necessary. Lit rooms may actually be preferred for outlining or other note-taking activities done while the video segment is on.

Video segments should have been carefully previewed and screened for potentially offensive or controversial material, technically poor copies and other problems. ■



Sample exercise based on "Jurassic Park".

### Directions:

- 1 Complete the following entry in Alexis' diary about her terrifying experience at the Visitor Center in Jurassic Park.
- 2 Each blank must be filled with a verb in its appropriate form.
- 3 Your responses are required to correspond with what is seen in the videoclip (tracks 42-43 of the laser disc).
- 4 What do these responses have in common?

After a long and dangerous hike, Alan, Tim and I (1) \_\_\_\_\_ at the Visitor Center. The place (2) \_\_\_\_\_ deserted. Alan (3) \_\_\_\_\_ us settled in the cafeteria and (4) \_\_\_\_\_ us there: he (5) \_\_\_\_\_ to look for Ellie, Hammond, and the others. However, he (6) \_\_\_\_\_ to return for us soon.

Meanwhile, we (7) \_\_\_\_\_ ourselves to the buffet; we (8) \_\_\_\_\_ the dessert best. Suddenly, we (9) \_\_\_\_\_ the presence of a velociraptor, its shadow sending chills down our spines. Panic-stricken, I (10) \_\_\_\_\_ for a few seconds and (11) \_\_\_\_\_ as soft as the jelly in my spoon. I (12) \_\_\_\_\_ helplessly still. It (13) \_\_\_\_\_ me quite a bit of effort to gather all my courage and get me off my seat. I (14) \_\_\_\_\_ my brother by his hand and together, we (15) \_\_\_\_\_ into the kitchen and (16) \_\_\_\_\_ the wooden door behind us. I promptly (17) \_\_\_\_\_ off the lights and with a prayer in our hearts, we (18) \_\_\_\_\_ down the aisle of stainless-steel counters and shelves. With hearts beating wildly, we quietly (19) \_\_\_\_\_ behind one of the counters. . . .